

Revitalization is Great—Let's Make Sure No One Is Left Out

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“Montgomery County can be very proud of the dramatic turnaround in Silver Spring. It seems that revitalization has reached the point where the energy created by public and private investment will keep it moving forward,” said Council Vice-President Tom Perez. “Now is the time to be especially vigilant about not squeezing out the small business people who have made Silver Spring their lives and livelihoods.”

Councilmember Howard Denis pointed out that, “This new grant fund is another tool for the County to encourage and retain small businesses which are a vital component of our local economy. In Bethesda, many of the small businesses in the Woodmont Triangle area are still hurting from the uncertain economy. To have a major project next door, like the closure of a parking garage, can be devastating. The fund will assist these small businesses who, though no fault of their own, suffer losses during the County's ongoing activities to rejuvenate our urban areas.”

As we cheer the arrival of new businesses and infrastructure, we cannot be too distracted to recognize the squeeze that is being put on small businesses as construction eliminates parking and foot traffic, and rents skyrocket. This is why the County Council unanimously supported Perez's and Denis's proposal to put \$100,000 into a special Economic Development Fund specifically to relief the pressure on small businesses affected by redevelopment and other county projects.

“We need a new initiative to identify small businesses in need of support to grow as Silver Spring, Bethesda, Wheaton and other areas are revitalized,” said Perez.

“I want to work with small businesses that are being left behind by rapid growth. Revitalization should never mean moving most community businesses out. The County must help existing businesses move into the future in Silver Spring, Bethesda and other dynamic Montgomery County communities.”